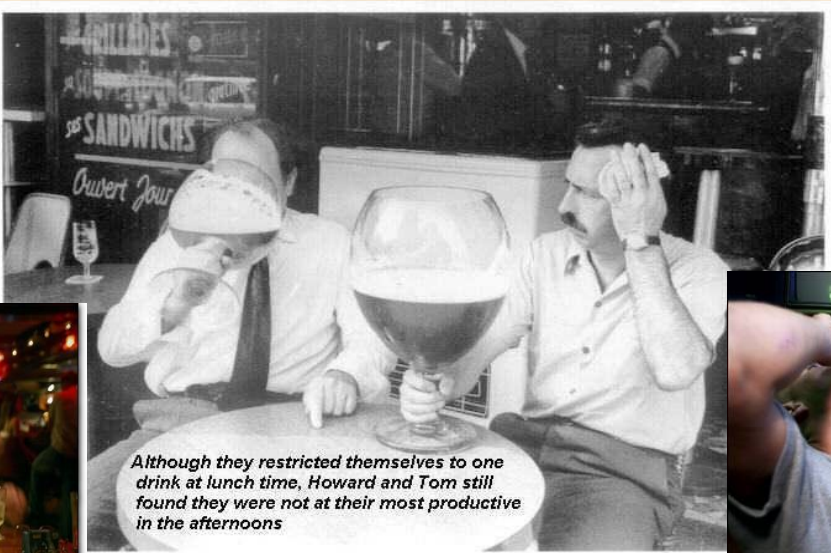




V CORPS SAFETY



HIGH RISK DRINKING AND ALCOHOL POISONING



Although they restricted themselves to one drink at lunch time, Howard and Tom still found they were not at their most productive in the afternoons



Joe Raedle / Getty Images



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PART I

**(FOR LEADER INFORMATION AND
REVIEW)**



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HIGH-RISK DRINKING AND ALCOHOL POISONING

PURPOSE: To provide awareness on high-risk drinking practices that could lead to poor risk decisions, bad judgment or alcohol poisoning.

CONCERN: High-risk drinking is a growing problem facing Soldiers returning from deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan.



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WHAT IS HIGH-RISK DRINKING?

- **Going to parties where the sole purpose is to drink and get drunk.**
- **Drinking games such as “chugging,” “doing shots,” using a funnel, hose, trough or punch bowl, and “preloading”, which causes too much alcohol to be quickly consumed on an empty stomach.**
- **Driving after drinking, or riding with someone under the influence.**
- **Mixing alcohol with medications or illegal drugs.**
- **Drinking while sleep deprived.**



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HIGH RISK DRINKING



Some High Risk Times:

- **The first few weeks of redeployment/reintegration**
- **After major exercises**
- **Major sporting events (Super Bowl Sunday, World Series, etc.)**
- **Holidays and birthdays (especially 21st)**
- **Break ups of romantic or family relationships**
- **Graduations or promotions**
- **Major life accomplishments**



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ALCOHOL POISONING

What causes Alcohol Poisoning?

- **Alcohol poisoning happens when large amounts of alcohol are consumed in a short period of time, such as “doing shots”, drinking games, chugging and hazing. The body cannot process the alcohol quickly enough and shuts down.**
- **When a lighter weight person tries to match a heavier weight person drink for drink.**
- **Alcohol poisoning can be fatal!**



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ALCOHOL POISONING

Tips to Prevent Alcohol Poisoning

- **Mixing drugs - Avoid mixing alcohol and drugs.**
- **Moderation - If you choose to drink, do so in moderation.**
- **Slow Down - Alcohol poisoning sometimes happens because people drink too much in a short time period.**
- **Eat Food - Eating while drinking reduces the chance that a person will suffer from alcohol poisoning.**
- **Learn First Aid - Knowing First Aid, including CPR, can help you deal with alcohol poisoning.**



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ALCOHOL POISONING

Symptoms of Alcohol Poisoning

- **Unable to wake the person with loud shouting or vigorous shaking.**
- **Inability of the person to stay awake for more than 2-3 minutes.**
- **Slow, irregular breathing—fewer than 8 breaths per minute or 10-second lapses in breathing.**
- **Weak, very rapid, or very slow pulse.**
- **Cold, clammy, pale, or bluish skin.**
- **Vomiting while passed out.**



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ALCOHOL POISONING

What to Do If You Suspect Alcohol Poisoning

If someone looks like they are overdosing, act quickly and follow these steps:

- **Call For Help!!! (117 for Germany, 911 for USA, Staff Duty, MPs, Combat Life Saver, Ambulance, etc.).**
- **Stay with the person until help arrives. Do not leave the person alone.**
- **Put the person on his/her side to prevent choking on vomit.**
- **Be prepared to give Emergency Medical personnel as much information as possible, including any drugs or medications the person may have taken.**
- **DO NOT try to give the person anything to eat or drink—this could cause choking.**
- **DO NOT put the person in a cold shower. They could drown, pass out or go into shock.**



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ALCOHOL POISONING



The Right Thing To Do...

Make conscious choices about drinking.

Some choices a Soldier might want to make are:

- Identify a “Battle Buddy” and stay with him/her.
- Say no when I don't really want a drink.
- Switch to non-alcoholic alternatives when I reach my limit.
- Go home at ____ (set a time).
- Plan in advance for a safe way to get home. I won't drive if I've had anything to drink and I won't ride with a driver who has been drinking.
- Have only ____ drinks (set a limit).
- I won't play drinking games.
- Spend a set amount of money on drinking and take only that much with me.
- I won't borrow for booze.
- I won't drink out of boredom. If I'm bored I'll go home.



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CHAINS TO TRAGEDY

Four Alcohol Related Fatalities, Last 120 Days

Common Factors:

Recent Redeployment - Sense of invincibility

Family Stress - Misunderstandings, Frustration, Intolerance

Lifestyle Changes - ETS, PCS, Retirement

Work Related Stress - Office Conflicts, Anxiety, PTSD and Battlefield Stress Release

Over Indulgence - Not Setting Limits, One year of Forced Abstinence Made Up for in One Evening. All were directly caused or influenced by alcohol consumption.

Buddy System - All of the victims had buddies from whom they became separated.

Social Drinking - Occurred around Holiday Activities or Special Events

All of these tragedies were preventable!! 1



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RISK MANAGEMENT

CONCERNS

- Who are my unaccompanied Soldiers who might be susceptible to risky behavior because they will be alone during the holiday period?
- Were any Soldiers exceptionally high stressed while downrange?
- What activities might your Soldiers participate in?
- What is the personality of each Soldier? (risk taker, loner, calm and easy going, etc.)
- Who has travel plans?
 - Will any Soldier be traveling alone?
 - How far will they travel?
 - Is their vehicle safety inspection complete?
 - Has ASMIS-2 risk assessment been completed?
- Who is spending time together? (Buddy system)



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HIGH RISK DRINKING

Addressing the Problem: Leader's Responsibility

- **Take action by talking to Soldiers about the impacts on health, family, and career from high-risk drinking.**
- **Be aware of the signs of possible alcohol abuse by your Soldiers (e.g. reluctant to talk with you, unwilling to talk about activities with friends, physical appearance, serious mood changes).**
- **If you or one of your Soldiers is having a problem with alcohol, contact the Installation Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program for help.**
- **Perform unexpected visits to the barracks to get a feel for what's going on.**
- **Understand your Soldiers and their intentions. What do they want to accomplish when they go out on the town, etc?**



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HIGH RISK DRINKING

Addressing the Problem: Leader's Responsibility

- Build a community coalition with local establishments to refuse serving drinks to Soldiers that appear to be intoxicated
- Utilize FRG's and "Guardian Angel Programs" to curb "binge drinking" and help Soldiers integrate back into a normal routine
- Identify "Battle Buddies"/"Designated Drivers" within the section to lend a helping hand when Soldiers decide to go out for a night on the town
- *Remember - High-risk drinking causes numerous negative second-hand effects that result in sexual assault, violence, and vandalism, among other problems.*



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LEADER'S ACTIONS WITH THEIR SOLDIERS

- **Ensure no one is left out during the holidays.**
- **Establish the buddy system and enforce it.**
- **Evaluate each soldier for “HIGH RISK” attitudes, fatigue, stress, etc.**
- **Complete a One-on-One review of leave plans discussing travel distance, rest plans, weather conditions, seatbelts, road speed, etc.**
- **Conduct a Holiday Safety Brief**
- **Ensure that every soldier knows how to contact you for help when needed.**
(excessive drinking, accidents, concern for your “Battle Buddy” or fellow soldier, etc.)

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PART I

**I
(OAK TREE
COUNSELING)**



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TRUE OR FALSE



- The most serious consequence of consuming alcohol is a hangover.
FALSE - The consumption of enough alcohol will cause death. This level is dependant on the individual.
- Alcohol increases your sexual drive and ability.
TRUE AND FALSE - Alcohol decreases your inhibitions, which factor into an sexual drive. However, alcohol decreases sexual functioning and is linked with the reduction of male hormones.
- Blood alcohol charts are a safe and accurate means of determining how much alcohol is circulating in your blood stream.
FALSE - Often these charts only take into account your weight and the number of drinks that you drank. These charts can be used as a guideline, but there are no guarantees to their validity.
- If an intoxicated person is semiconscious, you should encourage vomiting.
FALSE - Encouraging the semiconscious person to vomit could cause choking and/or aspiration.
- It is okay to put your drunk, passed out friend to bed and go back to party.
FALSE - NEVER LEAVE AN INTOXICATED PERSON ALONE. Stay with the person.



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HIGH RISK DRINKING TRAGEDIES

**In the past 4 months
there have been 4
alcohol related
fatalities in **V**
Corps.**



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TRAGEDY #1



An NCO went out for a drink with two of his subordinates. He was known to have family problems. The NCO drank excessively that night but was not known to be a hard drinker. He had the reputation of being a hard-charger and an excellent NCO. When he went to the latrine he lost his balance due to his inebriation, fell down the stairs, and suffered fatal head injuries. He had re-deployed approximately one month prior.



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DISCUSSION OF TRAGEDY



#1

You are the Platoon Leader/Sergeant/Platoon member of a Soldier who is known to have significant family problems. The Soldier is the Platoon Sergeant who went out for a drink with two of his subordinates. He had re-deployed approximately one month prior.

**As the Platoon Leader are there any concerns you may have with your Platoon Sergeant?
How could this soldier be alive today?**

How could you as his battle buddy have saved his life or protected him?

When should you call for help?



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TRAGEDY #2



A soldier was out drinking with his buddy at a local bar two days before Thanksgiving. His birthday was three days prior. While his friend went to the restroom, the Soldier went across the street to use the telephone. At 2130, he crossed the street (not at a crosswalk) and was struck by a speeding car. He was wearing dark clothes which made him more difficult to see. His injuries were fatal. It was determined that he had consumed only two drinks and was not inebriated; however, the alcohol could have slowed his reaction and affected his judgment.



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DISCUSSION OF TRAGEDY

#2

You are the Platoon Sergeant/Squad Leader of a Soldier who is being chaptered from the Army. He is spending his last weekend in the Army. The soldier and a friend go out to a bar. He is dressed in dark clothes. It is two days before Thanksgiving and he had just celebrated his birthday three days prior.

- As the Squad Leader are there any concerns you may have with this soldier?**
How could this soldier be alive today?

How could you as his battle buddy have saved his life or protected him?

When should you call for help?



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TRAGEDY #3



On 23 December 2005, 19 year old Soldier redeployed from 12 month tour in support of OIF III. At approximately 1800 after completing Day 1 Reintegration Training on Christmas Eve, the Soldier began drinking in his barracks with his “Battle Buddy” and other Soldiers in his unit. The group then went out drinking at two clubs and returned to the barracks at approximately 0400. Back in the barracks, the Soldier drank three shots of hard liquor in quick succession. He then proceeded to chug the remainder of a bottle of Jack Daniels (about 1/4 bottle) as his fellow Soldiers stood by encouraging him. Shortly thereafter, he became belligerent, lost his balance, and eventually passed out in his barracks room. His fellow Soldiers left him in his barracks room propped on his side around 0830 Christmas morning. Three hours later, Soldier was found dead in his barracks room where he had been left.



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DISCUSSION OF TRAGEDY

You are the Platoon Sergeant/Squad Leader #3 whose unit just redeployed from Iraq after serving your 365 days BOG. The unit arrived in Germany on December 23rd, and had just completed its 1st ½ day of re-integration training. Due to a Christmas Holiday, the unit was not scheduled for the 2nd ½ day of reintegration training until the morning of the 26th. Your soldiers want to celebrate Christmas and being home.

**As the Squad Leader are there any concerns you may have with the break in the re-integration schedule?
How could this soldier be alive today?
How could you as his battle buddy have saved his life or protected him?**

When should you call for help?



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TRAGEDY #4



On New Years Eve, a Soldier was downtown celebrating. He became excessively drunk and got separated from his buddies. In that short time, he became engaged in an altercation with Local Nationals, was severely beaten, and died from those injuries.



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DISCUSSION OF TRAGEDY

#4

You are the Platoon Sergeant/Squad leader of a group of Soldiers who decide to celebrate New Years Eve downtown in the local community. In order to save money, they “Pre-Load” so they won’t have to buy so many drinks at the bar.

As the Platoon Sergeant are there any concerns you may have with your Soldiers in this activity?

How could this soldier be alive today?

How could you as his battle buddy have saved his life or protected him?

When should you call for help?



COMMON FACTORS IN THESE TRAGEDIES

- **Recent re-deployment, invincibility**
- **Family or work related stress**
- **Holiday or special event**
- **Drinking of alcohol (over indulgence)**
- **Lost connection with buddies**
- **BATTLE BUDDIES FAILED**



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HIGH-RISK DRINKING AND ALCOHOL POISONING

Points of Emphasis:

- **Don't drink and drive!!**
- **Know your limits!**
- **Don't try to make up for lost drinking time!**
- **Don't be afraid to call for help!**
- **Be aware of your surroundings!**
- **Always have a "Battle Buddy" and take care of each other!**



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